
FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION(S)

Submitted by: Allen Biaggi, Director, Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (Commission Ex-Officio Member)

Finding: *(i.e., Conclusions reached after investigation and/or evaluation of facts)*

Funding for forest health and fire presuppression for the Lake Tahoe Basin is insufficient and inconsistent. In order to protect lives, property and the unique environment of the lake and basin, a long term stable and consistent source of funds must be secured.

Background and Supporting Evidence: *(A short statement justifying the Finding and describing desired outcome(s); usually no more than half a page.)*

It is widely recognized that the health of the forests in and around the Lake Tahoe basin is poor. Couple this with significant intrusion of homes and businesses into the wildlands and fire presents a significant potential risk to lives, property, water quality and the other natural values present within the basin.

To improve forest health, prescribed fire, forest thinning and biomass removal must be accomplished at a significant cost per acre. This is not a one time event. Ongoing maintenance of the forests must occur on a periodic basis, again at substantial cost.

A variety of sources are currently funding forest health work within the Lake Tahoe Basin. Unfortunately, these funding sources are short term and not consistent over time; just the opposite of what is needed to ensure healthy and sustainable forests. A long term sufficient and consistent source of funding is needed.

Recommendation(s) *(Based upon an analysis of the Finding, the following recommendation(s) should be made to the Governors):*

It is recommended the Governors of the State of Nevada and California work with their states respective Congressional delegations to establish and fund a forest health endowment for the Lake Tahoe Basin and the Great Basin. A potential funding source is though the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act (SNPLMA).

Impacts of Implementation: *(The implementation of any Recommendation is likely to have specific impacts. Consider potential consequences related to each of the following areas):*

Analysis of impacts on the following factors is REQUIRED (Best Estimate):

Cost: Capitalization of the endowment must be sufficient enough to generate interest to fund yearly health work within the basin without impacting principle (est. \$100 to \$200 million)

Funding Source: Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act (SNPLMA)

Staffing: A program administrator (full or part time) may be needed to provide administrative and fiscal oversight of the endowment.

Existing regulations or laws: SNPLMA requirements. Congressional action will be needed to establish the endowment using SMPLMA.